

Sermon Based Small Group

Series: "More. Jesus." (Gospel of Mark)

Title: "Behind Enemy Lines"

Scripture: Mark 5:1-20

Date: March 10, 2019

Introduction

- Has there ever been a time you were lost or where you were looking for someone? Can you share the story?

Reviewing the Teaching

- Read Mark 5:1 -20. But first, talk about what has happened in the last 24 hours (Mark 4). Do you feel exhausted? Now read.
- What stood out to you as a potentially significant takeaway in this week's teaching?
 - Why did it stand out?
 - How does it relate to you in your life situation now?
- Pastor Dave created a great story with behind enemy lines, a prisoner of war and light in the darkness. Did this help you to picture this story?
- Read verses 18 to 20. What did the liberated man do? Jesus told him, "Go home." Stay where you are. And then He said, "Tell them.. the Great things.. and how He had mercy on you."
 - Some people are generals, the Apostles. Some are foot soldiers, the healed man. Which are you?
 - How can you be a foot soldier right where you are?

Digging Deeper

- Let's talk about demons. Or maybe you would rather not. What comes to mind when the topic of demons comes up? Many of us think of low (or sometimes high) budget films. Are demons real? Really?
- It is not consistent to believe in God and in a good personal supernatural being and then refuse to believe that there are evil personal supernatural beings (much of this discussion comes from an article by Tim Keller). Demons help to explain two things. First, people have deeply complex problems. These can be explained physically, psychologically, morally and, sometimes, demonically. How is this helpful? Can it be misunderstood? Think of the passage we are studying. How does demon possession help to explain the situation?
- Demons help to explain systemic evil in the world. Consider the holocaust, apartheid or some other deeply evil event. Do you think that most of the people acting as oppressors were evil incarnate? Or were some of them basically like you or me? What would it take to participate in a horribly evil thing for a sustained period of time?
- The impact of sin hits us every day in three ways. One is that our sinful choices have consequences. Another is that we live in a corrupted world. We get sick. We have to

work hard. Natural disasters happen. But demons can magnify, aggravate or complicate the sin in our hearts that we commit to God or to other people. Do you have a temptation that just sucks you in? Are there other ways that you have seen this?

- Okay, time for some relief! In our passage today we see Jesus as a Liberator. We have issues that come from the deep recesses of our soul and Jesus can free us from the forces that enslave us. Think through how Jesus handled the demons. Were they a threat to Him?
- Today's passage uses military words; legion, herd (recruits), permission (to dismiss), and rus (to charge)? Why? How is Jesus a liberator?
- Jesus gives a choice here. He can be the Master, or some other enslaving force can be the master. Maybe this sounds a bit strong. Read Ephesians 6:10ff. "When Jesus comes into our lives, and becomes the supreme Lord, his "kingdom" begins to heal us of the denial, begins to heal our family life, begins to liberate us from the anxiety we feel over money and work." (Keller")

Applying it to Life

- We talked about the rescuer and the rescue - which one are you?
- In Mark 4 and 5 people come into God's presence. Jesus' overwhelming power and glory leaves them trembling in fear (Mark 4:21; 5:15, 33 and 36). Have you ever felt that fear or awe? Tell the group about it.
- The timeline for this story is intense. It happens over two days. How do you think you would have held up in this situation?
- On Sunday, Pastor Dave pointed out that Jesus came, set the demoniac free and then returned. How much did Jesus care about that one person? How much did he care about a group of people that his "group", Israel, did not care about? What does that mean for you? For your neighbours?
- Sower, Seed, Soil. Jesus, Word, Heart. People were afraid because they saw God. In addition to awe, people also saw Jesus' power over creation and the spiritual world. How does seeing Jesus clearly help to open your heart to His Word? What did you learn about who Jesus is today?
- At the end of the story, the healed man asks to come with Jesus. What does Jesus tell him to do? How does that impact you?

Prayer

- There is demon possession and demon oppression. Both are real. Faith in the Risen Lord is the start of resisting this evil. Prayer for each other.
- Continue to pray for specific needs in your group.
- Is there something else from the message that you would like to pray about?